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THE WEEK 387

RUSSIA—PRO AND CON *Waldemar Gurian* 390

WHAT IS "PRO DEO"? *Felix A. Morlion* 392

COMMUNICATIONS 396

THE STAGE *Kappo Phelan* 399

THE SCREEN *Philip T. Hartung* 400

AN ENIGMA EXPLAINED *Barry Byrne* 401

MORE BOOKS OF THE WEEK 402
Primer of the Coming World—John Merle Coulter—The War

THE INNER FORUM 405

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Henry A. Wallace

THE DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION is now sufficiently far behind us for almost everyone to have had his say with regard to the basic and most significant decision of that gathering—the refusal of Henry Agard Wallace. The cross-currents which led to this result were politically highly complex. It is much too simple to say that Mr. Wallace was supported by labor and opposed by Southern reactionaries. Mr. Wallace had the support of the most vociferous of labor's representatives present at the convention—the PAC and its chairman, Sidney Hillman. But he likewise faced the expressed opposition of the AFL. Thus the most recent issue of the American Federation of Labor's *Weekly News Letter* gloats over the result of the vice-presidential nomination. It says: "By being photographed publicly with Senator Truman the day before the nomination took place . . . President Green let it be known that the Federation favored the Missouri Senator. . . ." Even Mr. Wallace's labor support worked against him, for however legitimate the organization of such a pressure group as the CIO's Political Action Committee, the fact that its chairman and moving spirit is a man whose union is known to have used gangsters and labor tactics of the most cynical and reprehensible sort certainly alienated an important labor element, whose support might easily have sufficed to change the outcome.

But the most important single element in Mr. Wallace's defeat seems now unquestionably to have been the bitter enmity of the city machines and their leaders. These men have always known that Mr. Roosevelt is enough of a "practical" politician not seriously to threaten their political methods. They also knew that if Mr. Wallace were to become President, they could not rely on his closing his eyes to the means they must use to preserve their empires. He is too honest a man to be trusted with the presidency. That is the sad truth. For whatever mistakes he may have made —and almost everyone will grant that he has made mistakes—Henry Wallace is obviously and consistently an honest man and a man of Christian principle. Politics and religion don't mix, we have been told time and again. Evidently this "principle" works, in practice. (We have our own reservations as to Mr. Wallace and the presidency—reservations based on our judgment of his abilities rather than his character and principles. But this was not the question in Chicago.)

Unhappily it must be confessed that many of those who insisted the most ruthlessly in applying this "principle" at the convention a few weeks ago are Catholics and are held up as models—or typical specimens, according to your point of view—of Catholicism. For that not only Catholics but all Christians must be ashamed. And as the *Christian Century* points out, the result of the Democratic repudiation of Mr. Wallace will be most important not in the immediate sphere of internal policy, but in the far corners of the world. "In China, in Russia, in Latin America, in all the under-privileged parts of the earth men will begin to revise their views regarding future relations with the United States in the light of the repudiation of this man who has spoken to them words of promise as the representative of his country." The *Labor Leader,* official organ of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, said it more lyrically. "It is a very old song no matter how new the words. It is the song of Christendom and all Crusades, it is the song men sing as they build anywhere the City of God. 'East and West *do* meet,' he said. Not . . . on a shifting basis of imperial exploitation but in the bloodstream of a common humanity, in the royal brotherhood of Christ. This of course is not good politics but it is good sense; it is in the record of every nation that when men built otherwise they failed."

As we look back at it, the important thing about the Democratic Convention was not that it nominated Senator Truman, but rather the way in

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which and the reasons for which the rejection of Henry Wallace was brought to pass.

The Argentine Puzzle

LOOKING back to the frantic days when the nazis were sweeping everything before them, it is understandable that the United States should have rushed to do whatever was possible to strengthen Brazil against any threat from the potential jumping off place of Dakar. To have built and equipped air bases, contributed warships and planes and military training was only natural. It was a precaution urgently called for. But today it appears that in our haste to fill the breaches we overlooked one unhappy effect of such a program. Washington apparently did not realize that by confining our arming primarily to Brazil, we were upsetting the existing balance of forces to a dangerous degree. We did not adequately foresee the reaction in Argentina.

It is easier to say now that the United States might have made at least token contributions to Argentine armament—accompanied by the most assiduous efforts to cultivate more intimate ties of all sorts with Buenos Aires. Instead we roundly abused the comparatively friendly Ortiz-Castillo government for not breaking off diplomatic relations with the Axis and getting into the war. We greatly strengthened Argentina's traditional enemy and only real South American rival at the very moment we were trying to organize a united American front against our enemies in Europe and the Far East. To many proud Argentinians it must have seemed the final insult from the long-resented "Colossus of the North."

So, while it is all too easy to gibe at the present colonels' régime and whatever aid or comfort they succeed in giving to our enemies, many of our professed "liberals" might bandy their epithets a little less lightheartedly if they were to consider for a moment how much the United States is responsible for the army coup. They might be given further pause by a realistic appraisal of the present situation.

It goes much farther back than our hasty continental defense measures. Despite the considerable success of the Good Neighbor policy, suspicion and fear of the United States is far from allayed. Even in most friendly Brazil, as Hernane Tavares de Sá reports in the current *Inter-American,* people in all walks of life and in every sector of that vast country are asking to a man, "What will *os ianquis* do about the bases?" How must the less friendly South Americans feel about it?

This is the atmosphere in which we have to meet the saber-rattling, rearmament, economic autarchy and other tragically familiar signs now emanating from Buenos Aires. And yet if we let well enough alone for fear of alienating irreparably the peoples of South America, it may mean that once more an aggressor is able to get away with it against weaker neighbors; the establishment of international law and order will be put off that much longer.

To prevent war or aggression in Latin America without arousing widespread resentment we shall have to adopt or intensify certain broad lines of action. The initiative for any preventative measures must come from Argentine's threatened neighbors—not from Washington, D. C. But in response to such an appeal we must do everything possible to strengthen those who are threatened; and we must make it plain that we shall take full part with the other nations in thwarting such aggression. Restraining Argentina, for instance, would be a common responsibility acted upon in concert. In contrast, the temporary recall of ambassadors and the threat of economic sanctions would seem to have the opposite of the effect intended. They are steps which enable the colonels to get their people to rally round, yet they do not hinder sufficiently the growth of that nation's military power. To avert Argentine aggression appears to require the combined strength and wisdom of all the American governments; it certainly calls for restraint on the part of certain of our irresponsible publicists.

California Against the Field

IT SELDOM gets into the papers, but a real conflict is impending in the Senate over the ratification of a treaty with Mexico allotting certain vital percentages of the waters of the Rio Grande and Colorado Rivers for purposes of irrigation. Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Utah, Wyoming, and possibly Nevada, the other states involved, are in favor of the treaty's ratification; but the large farmers of California are bitterly opposed. This is a real test of the good neighbor policy. The Mexicans are chiefly dependent upon agriculture for their meager susteance, although their land is arid and only eight percent of it is arable. Water from these rivers is a primary need; increased farm production is Mexico's most urgent economic problem.

Business Week, which has been performing a real service in keeping this situation before its readers, currently reports that the Californians do not actually need all the water they begrudge our neighbors across the border. It will mean, however, if the treaty is ratified in the interest of the common good, that California will have to forego some of the surplus waters it has been using from the Colorado. To give it up is obviously not easy for interested Californians. Once again the notorious factories in the fields of the Imperial Valley seem to be a dog in the manger.

THE COMMONWEAL extends every good wish to Father John LaFarge, S.J., on the occasion of his

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official appointment to a position he has long been filling, as Editor of *America*.

Obscurantism III

STEPS LEAD down into the swimming pool. There are two steps above the water and then the other steps are beneath the surface of the water. When you stand looking down into the water you see the trees and the sky reflected in the water. It is a question of focus; sometimes you see the trees, sometimes you see the water, a water spider moves suddenly on the surface, stops, a leaf does not move. The reflected branches of the trees do not move and the foliage arching over the pool does not move. Even with the greatest precautions when you step into the water there is an immense commotion in the mirrored leaves and branches, and then it is quieted and then it is disturbed again and then you are in the water and the trees round the pool rise, their branches and their leaves meet overhead.

There is no use counting too much on reflected truth. Invariably something disturbs the reflection, distorts the reflection. But there is no use counting too much on the trees arching over the pool and, when you are swimming on your back looking up at the trees and at the sky, there is nothing whatever to prove that this is an American sky and not a foreign sky or that these trees are in Glen Cove, Long Island, New York, and do not lean out over the waters of the lake of Geneva, Switzerland, or over the pool at Acque Albule near Rome, Italy.

There are bound to be complications if you have ever looked up at the sky from more than one place on the map, with the cool waters of more than one pool, more than one lake, more than one sea supporting you. The map was a map of Europe and America and there were little figures of people diving from springboards placed wherever there had been a day's swimming that one had desired to remember. There were figures at Land's End swimming purposively toward America, figures at Almeria where the water had been very cold at Christmas time, figures at Rivabella which, despite appearances, has been one of the Normandy invasion beaches, figures off Los Angeles, figures off Capo Colonne in the Adriatic where the temple's columns rise on the lonely promontory, figures in the lake at Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, and in the lake at Dublin, New Hampshire, and figures marked on the land instead of in the water where the bathing had been in rivers and the rivers were just lines on the map and you could not put the diving, swimming figures in them. The map is lost.

It does not matter about the map or about the places or who made the marks on the map or who swam in the different seas or lakes or rivers. It is the same for everyone. One cannot be in every place at once and, wherever one is, there are also these places in which one has been which come back into the mind. They are lost, irretrievably, yet, because one desires or fears them, they come back into the mind and one tries to hold them, but the reflection is distorted and disturbed and there is no going back to the places. There is no way in which one may travel throughout half a lifetime—even if it were only from one furnished room to another—and then retrace for half a lifetime one's steps. So that there must always be reflected time and space, in the waters of some pool or another, and the effort to hold all the past and all the distances in one's mind and heart. The effort is a torment.

There is nothing which one may hold. Even if there were no war, even if the ruins did not accumulate, separation itself destroys. The child came out of the house onto the porch. The new bicycle leant against the white pillar which supported the roof of the porch. The child rode the bicycle down the hill to the river. The child swam in the river. A man remembers that. A man remembers the house, the bicycle, the hill, the river, but everything has gone except the river, and what are these half wild flowers still marking the ordered gardens? (From an airplane you look down on the wasted Assyrian lands and you can can tell where there was a city, where there was a paved road, because the color of the earth over the road, over the buried city, differs from that of the desert where once there were fields.)

So that it is not just that there were before the war certain political beliefs which seemed to contain a promise of order and progress for the state—for all states—and in which, now, it is no longer possible to hope. It is not just that there was once a time when people thought if they could be the government everything would be all right, and now there is a time when one would not know what to do if one were the government. It is a question which continues to trouble you even if you have given up the idea that you can reform the world. It is the question of man's separateness from the world.

The quiet trees arch over the swimming pool, the trees are reflected in the pool, the escalator in the Pennsylvania Station carries the soldiers up from the trains, down to the trains, there is no longer war in Sicily, the Sicilian villages are quiet in the night, the elevator carries the miners down to the pits in West Virginia and in Wales, the architect stands on the site and plans where to place the house in relation to the view, in Normandy a wall crumbles and the dust rises in the village street, the tides rise and fall in the seas.

Perhaps the only thing to do is to wash the feet of the poor, visit the sick, clothe the naked.

C.G. PAULDING.

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Russia—Pro and Con

What we can hope for in the future

Waldemar Gurian

THE CONSCIOUS or unconscious pro-communist fellow-traveler is the greatest enemy of a lasting understanding with the Soviet Union. He provokes increased distrust of Russia by his praise of everything that she does, by his gullibility which cannot find any fault in Stalin and by his hysterical claims that everybody not sharing his attitude is a fascist and an evil man. The fellow traveler succeeds only in raising questions the discussion of which cannot improve relations with Russia. His blundering attempts to explain, even to celebrate Stalin's purge as a wise, preventive fight against fifth columnists evoke the reminder that the USSR is a totalitarian régime which acts with the utmost brutality against real or potential enemies. His assertion that there is the same religious freedom in Russia today as in the USA produces an underestimation of changes which have happened and are happening in the Soviet Union.

On the other side there are those opponents of everything Soviet-Russian who do not see any fundamental difference between Lenin's régime of world revolutionary expectations, immediately after 1917, and Marshal Stalin's Russia with her patriotic war. They are at the most willing to grant that Stalin has somewhat changed the old Bolshevik methods. The Third International is replaced by the victorious Red armies. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*—the Machiavellianism of Stalin, who disguises himself as a nationalist, is believed to be more dangerous than the openly Marxian communist Third International. It does not matter what Russia does—the eternal distrust remains: the Red armies do not start an offensive—is that not a clear proof that Russia has an understanding with Germany? The Red armies start an offensive and advance—that only proves a secret understanding with Germany. The Soviet Union was criticized for sponsoring the Third International—but the dissolution of the Third International is only an impressive proof of a skilful use of new communist methods.

Unquestionably the rulers of the Soviet Union have a heavy responsibility for the distrust which Russia faces. The past of Stalin and his associates gives no ground for any consideration of them as idealistic humanitarians interested only in the welfare of the world. The political methods of the Kremlin, which prefers secrecy and refuses, e.g., any mediation of its quarrel with Poland, do not improve the situation. Sir Bernard Pares is not alone in worrying about the talk concerning an unavoidable third world war against Russia.

*

Is a lasting understanding with the Soviet Union really impossible? It is necessary to discuss this question in the most deliberate way. The pros and cons have to be weighed carefully. It is particularly important to realize the limits of a possible understanding—to demand or expect too much risks getting nothing.

In the first place it is necessary to emphasize that the Soviet Union will not be ready to limit its sovereignty, that is, to accept a world government. It does not matter whether this attitude is justified by communist ideologies, which regard a subordination of the communist régime to a non-communist world government as impossible, or by nationalistic arguments, as they are used in other countries. But does that signify a blunt rejection of any cooperation with other states in order to maintain peace? Was it pure hypocrisy or—more politely—a tactical consideration which determined the Soviet rulers to accept in Moscow and Teheran the peace program of Secretary Hull based upon cooperation of sovereign nations? Was this acceptance made only to obtain a second front? I do not think so. The Soviet Union needs peace. Too much of its land and of its industrial life has been destroyed. The period of war sacrifices cannot be prolonged indefinitely. The chances of a war against the USA and England are—to put it mildly—slight. Economic help from outside is not only welcome, but necessary. W. H. Chamberlin, a most critical observer of all policies of the Soviet Union, has correctly stated that before World War I a policy of limitless expansion was out of the question for Russia, because of economic and technological conditions; that statement is valid also for the future.

But this interest of Stalin in the maintenance of peace does not preclude the most uncomfortable claims by Russia. The change from world revolutionary communism to Soviet nationalism does not solve all difficulties. Russia is trying to repossess not only many territories lost with her defeat in

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World War I, and her weakness in consequence of revolutions and civil wars (the Baltic States, Eastern Polish Territories, Bessarabia) but she also hopes to unite all Ukrainians in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. These demands are known. We do not know how far Russia will go in trying to influence the Balkans and Central Europe, though it is obvious that Russia will not accept any federation on her western frontiers which she regards as a "cordon sanitaire." An even more veiled mystery surrounds Russia's claims in the Far East, where it seems that she would like to become Japan's heir in some Chinese territories.

I will not discuss the merits or non-merits of the Russian territorial claims. I ask only the following questions: how far can the fulfillment of these claims be tolerated—or prevented? Will we go to war in order to prevent the realization of any of the Russian claims? Have we to assume the attitude of a perfectionism which overlooks the necessity of tolerating (not approving) a lesser evil? Is it not the art of politics to distinguish between concessions which can be made and those which cannot be made? The trouble with the appeasement of Hitler was that it did not and could not work, that it made a new world war unavoidable. Of course, there are limits to concessions. A Russian policy which would make the existence of an independent Poland impossible would demonstrate that Stalin has embarked upon a policy of unlimited expansion. But on the other hand, is it necessary to regard as eternal and unchangeable the Russo-Polish boundaries as fixed by the Russo-Polish treaty of Riga (1921)? Is the attempt of Stalin to retake territories conquered by Peter the Great a proof that he attempts to dominate all Europe? On the other hand, I think Russian claims—which would jeopardize, e.g., the existence of an independent Poland or would mean the domination of Central Europe—must and can be rejected.

But will Russia present such claims? Russian strength will not continue to grow after World War II. Russia will need American help for reconstruction. Much will depend upon the circumstances under which Germany will be defeated, but even if Russian armies deliver the final mortal blow it would be very unwise for Russia to remain isolated or even to challenge the United States.

Those full of distrust may object, what will happen if Russia reaches an understanding with a non-Hitlerian Germany? Russo-German cooperation will make Russian cooperation with the USA superfluous and Russia will therefore become a dangerous threat. This cooperation, they assert, is being prepared by the Free Germany committee which is held in readiness in Moscow. To these prognostications may be answered that it is very difficult to see how such cooperation could be realized, even with an outspoken anti-Hitler and pro-communist régime in Germany. Too much happened after the German armies entered Soviet territory. Russian propaganda now calls not only for the punishment of some German war criminals but the use of German laborers for reconstruction purposes. Even granting that Stalin is not a likable fellow, it does not follow that he would choose the losing side in order to commit an evil action. If he attempts an understanding with Germany against the USA and England he would initiate a policy which will make him dependent upon German good will. Germany could threaten him with a change of attitude. A defeated and weakened Germany is much more to Stalin's interest, for it could not be used even as a threat against him, and its resources could be utilized by Russia.

*

But what about relations between Russia and Japan? There may have been some in Moscow who believe that the capitalist USA is more dangerous for Russia than the empire of the Mikado; but this attitude is today as important as Stalin's famous oft-quoted statement to Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka, "We are both Asiatics." And again: must we believe that Stalin would like to lose in order to justify those who regard him as the incarnation of all evil? He will try to demand a price if his help is necessary to defeat Japan, but it is not sure that this price must be paid. The Russo-Japanese non-aggression pact of 1941 was most useful to Russia in her war against Germany—what would have happened if Moscow had been taken a few days after Pearl Harbor? Japan could have obtained everything without trouble from a defeated Russia. Russia would have been unable to defend herself against Germany if she had been obliged to fight a two-front war. Those who picture a Russo-Japanese alliance against the USA as a possibility, even as a probability, indulge in *negative* wishful thinking. The world of the twentieth century is bad and dangerous enough, but to add to real threats imaginary ones is superfluous. The trouble in the Far East consists not in the prospect of Russo-Japanese cooperation, but in the difficulty of settling relations between Russia and China.

Russian expansion can be restrained by the necessity of Russian cooperation with the USA, in order to get supplies and to maintain peace after the period of utmost sacrifice. It may be that the rulers of the Soviet Union will compare this necessity with the retreats under Lenin—for instance, with the necessity to make concessions to foreign capitalists and to Russian peasants after the period of the Civil War and war communism—concessions which were called the New Economic Policy. And they may believe that it will be possible some day to abolish this new interna-

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tional policy after a certain period, as the NEP was abolished after the Soviet régime was consolidated again. I think it is not very interesting to discuss the personal beliefs of Stalin and his friends. The Marxian dialectic as manipulated by Stalin permits the justification of any policy. Nobody can appeal, in Russia, against this interpretation. But those who do not accept Marxism as the interpretation of real developments can regard the changes of the régime in Soviet Russia not as provisional concessions but as proofs of the incompatibility between Marxian doctrines and reality. Soviet nationalism has supplanted international world revolution; and if this nationalism will continue to stir unrest outside of Russia for Russian purposes, for example, as some fear, in Latin and Central America, its successes will be very limited. They will only result in creating new combinations between social aspirations and nationalism which will never accept a leadership from Moscow. I am also sure that the prestige of the Red Army as liberator will not last long if the Red Army tries to prepare a real Russian domination outside the former boundaries of the Russian empire (some Slavonic groups excepted).

Stalin cannot abolish the terminology in whose name he came into power—but this terminology is no longer the expression of a real belief. Communism is dead in Russia, though the Communist Party continues to be the ruling group. Is Russia, then, as some optimists have discovered, developing toward democracy, toward a realization of the freedoms which are basic in the American system? Unfortunately this view does not correspond with the facts. A most complete domination under a one-party state continues to be characteristic of Russian life. There is no probability of a *fundamental* change, though some concessions are being made, and will continue—e.g., religious groups may get more official toleration, but under close control by the state. But it is difficult to see how a régime that has won the war can be changed. Revolutions happened in Russia after defeats, but not after victories. One factor can help to improve the situation, to soften the iron militaristic totalitarianism which is the mark of Russia today: the necessity of cooperation with USA and therefore also with England. It would help much if the Russian masses, and I mean by these masses the new Russian technicians, engineers, skilled workers, etc., would realize that modern industry and technique are not necessarily connected with the peculiar political system of Stalin's Russia. The story told by John Scott in his "Behind the Urals" about the absurd ideas which his Russian wife had about American life before her marriage is characteristic. If the Russian masses have a freer access to the world outside the Soviet Union after the war—that would work infinitely more against official ideologies than any polemics, uncritical support of everything that is said against Russia and exaggerated fears of the success of communist propaganda.

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A realistic attitude toward the Soviet Union will avoid at the same time over-enthusiastic hopes and unfounded fears. There is no reason to assume that Russia is necessarily changing toward a régime which is a more or less perfect democracy. Not idealistic considerations but considerations of power politics are the basis for a hope that an understanding with Russia is possible which will outlast the fight against Hitler Germany, and which may develop into a kind of universal organization of the world for peace. There are no reasons for a conflict between the USA and Russia. There is good reason to believe that Russia will not (and cannot) embark upon a policy of unlimited expansion in Europe and Asia and world revolutionary activity. In any case, such attempts of the Soviet rulers could be easily checked. That a totalitarian régime will very likely continue in Russia will, of course, set a limit to understanding with her, for an understanding with Russia will not be based upon a community of political principles but upon the necessity of doing everything to avoid a new world war. A purely negative attitude toward Russia, which identifies her with the ideology of the Soviet rulers, which takes in all boundary questions, an anti-Russian attitude, which overlooks the fact that many difficulties of Russia with her neighbors have nothing to do with the communistic régime since they existed much earlier—such an attitude is as unrealistic as it is meaningless. It will also not help to weaken the grip of the communist ruling group, but to produce the contrary result. General assurances of love for the Russian masses are not sufficient. A realistic policy of understanding with the Soviet Union alone can help to maintain a lasting, though precarious, peace. Such a realistic policy would judge the merits of each problem developing between the USSR and the USA. It would avoid the pitfalls of a sterile negativism as well as those of an uncritical praise of everything Soviet-Russian, which is merely the product of ridiculous gullibility.

What Is "Pro Deo"?

FELIX A. MORLION

THE BASIC observation and fundamental conclusion which has given rise to the different Pro Deo services is simple. Modern man wants news and not ideas: we must give him news and clarify for him the ideas carried by the news.

The first step toward the realization of the Pro Deo aims has been the setting up of a net-

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work to supply news which touches religious issues and can, at the same time, be of interest to secular press and radio. The present organization is the result of a long and slow process of growth in the key countries of Europe and America where pioneers of different Catholic news agencies started collecting the threads for a Catholic coverage of current events. In the first period, it was inevitable that these Catholic news agencies should have thought more of supplying the Catholic press with news than of trying to interest the secular press in religious information. Catholic newspapers understand that they need a common clearinghouse for news as they cannot individually appoint correspondents all over the world. For this reason the Catholic press has for a time been the almost exclusive concern of the Catholic news agencies. With the years the consciousness grew that the supplying of Catholic papers cannot be the only task of the Catholic news agencies. Most countries, even those which are Catholic, are influenced much more by the secular paper or commercial radio than by the diocesan or national Catholic publication. This realistic conclusion has prompted, since a few years before World War II, a steady and persevering effort to develop a new technique in the distribution of religious news to the secular press.

The success of the network centered in Breda-Brussels was due mainly to the fact that it gradually developed news services which avoided clericalism without falling into secularism. Clerical news is of course necessary. It is the family news of the Church. The faithful Catholic reader will read, in his Catholic papers, the discourses of his bishop and pastor, the report of celebrations conducted by religious orders and societies, the various events of the Catholic community. He will be interested in this not because the bishop is a great orator, but because he is his spiritual father. He will read the Catholic reports not because they have general news value but because they contain news of his beloved spiritual family.

There is, however, another section of church news that has a definite appeal for the secular press and radio. It is the news about the stand of the Church on social, economic and political matters. The Catholic Church is a strongly built organization of some 400,000,000 members. It created the present civilization of the Old World, and, by a second filiation, the civilization of the New World. It has withstood the political tempests of twenty centuries and has, in this twentieth century, displayed a dynamic power not to be expected after the disintegrating influence of a century of rationalism. Indeed the modern enemies of the Church have unwittingly made the Church more interesting than ever to the secular mind. And so the exact detailed and authoritative statement of the policies of the Church and of the policies of any nation toward the Church has news value. The service of the original CP[1] agency of Breda-Brussels, and later CIP[2] was based upon that fact.

It soon became evident that occasional releases and periodical campaigns were insufficient. Real influence in the daily press is only to be acquired by daily releases because these alone fit in the rhythm of the papers' routine and can come to be considered as a normal, organic part of journalistic life. So the Catholic news agency of Breda-Brussels decided to add to Church-State coverage some other elements of daily interest. This led to the coverage of those secular events having some connection with spiritual principles. A great number of statements, actions, trends, movements have no direct relation with the Church as an organized body, but are favorable or detrimental to human dignity, to justice, to charity, to national morality or to the Christian tradition. These events may be covered more or less satisfactorily by secular news agencies, but they are treated better by the staff of a Catholic news agency.

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Having thus marked the rules for the choice of news, we must sketch the Pro Deo technique of news interpretation. The intelligent reader wants to know not only the material elements in an event, but the conditions which give it an individual character. That is to say, he demands a circumstantial story. Also he wants the background story. If he is particularly keen he will not be content with the news as a fact. He will ask "Why did this happen?" To satisfy the demands of that more exacting type of reader we must have what has been called in Europe *Journalisme en Profondeur* (third dimension journalism). CIP correspondents are chosen therefore from among those who possess a general synthesis of the great principles of Christian philosophy and theology and are especially trained to apply them to the treatment of current news. The rules of this higher journalism are elaborated in a special course, "Methodology Pro Deo," which is being published by CIP for the formation of specialists in the apostolate of public opinion.

When, first in Switzerland, then in America, Poland, Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Catholic news agencies started their work, Catholic papers were finally able to increase their popular appeal by a larger variety of short news reports.

But the secular press was still generally inhospitable to the spiritual issues of current events. In certain papers of some European countries, this lack of religious information was undoubtedly due

[1] Commission Permanente des Directeurs de Journaux Catholiques.

[2] Center of Information Pro Deo.

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to bad will. Pope Pius XI rightly spoke of "a conspiracy of silence in the world press" regarding certain forms of religious persecution. But in the great majority of cases, the secular press is not anti-religious or anti-Catholic. The lack of an authoritative international clearinghouse supplying religious information adapted to the needs of the commercial press was certainly one of the main Christian deficiencies to be overcome.

This was the driving idea of Dr. Hein Hoeben who, after nearly ten years of persevering effort, was finally able to start an international clearinghouse of news through the pooling of the staffs of the Breda and Brussels news agencies. In the three years of operation of this CP set-up (from March, 1937, to May, 1940) a steady augmentation of attention to religious issues of the times could be ascertained in the secular press of the countries which were serviced. The New York agency of the CIP set-up, centered in Lisbon since July, 1940, continues the Breda-Brussels tradition. It has succeeded in developing first a newsletter, the *CIP Correspondence,* for leaders of public opinion; then a series of syndicated columns, *Undercurrents;* and finally a daily service, primarily adapted to the secular press. In the United States the secular press has found unsuspected vistas opened to it by CIP material, and it now begins to look forward with interest to the regular supply of news with religious significance. Additional centers have since been established at Ottawa, Mexico City, Montevideo, and Willemstad (Netherlands West Indies).

News agencies, papers and magazines phone CIP or send a representative to find the answer to important religious news questions. One director of a nation-wide radio hook-up has said that the development of a more balanced religious trend in its news analysis is due to CIP material.

To give a more concrete picture of the news apostolate in the modern world, let us look at a few topics handled not without results in the last decade.

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One of the crucial questions with which public opinion has been concerned in recent years is that of the religious situation in Russia. As it was impossible to judge the background of the contradictory news items coming out of the Soviet States, the Breda agency decided to send one of its staff writers, who used the press name "Alan Leroy," to make a thorough investigation of the situation. He spoke Russian fluently and was able to escape strict supervision. He talked not only with officials but with the simple people, as well as with the "popis" (parish priests) who under great difficulties carried on their apostolate. The write-up of his experiences made an impressive series of articles which were syndicated internationally and later published (in 1938) in book form under the title "Soviet Bankruptcy." The gist of the conclusions was that as early as 1937 even the leaders of the "League of the Godless" were forced to admit that their propaganda had failed with the masses, and that the zeal of their 2,000,000 members (among 190 million people) was so ill rewarded that the future of atheism looked anything but bright. The Russian religious leaders, on the other hand, forgot what they had suffered, and rejoiced in the fact that the thousand-year-old Christian tradition was being reborn in the soul of the people, and purified by the elimination of all material incentives to the practice of religion. Through contacts with Russian sailors who had a deep religious faith, and through other channels of communication, new religious movements in Russia were revealed and widely published. Among the Komsomol youth a re-discovery of Christ was being effected by means of "Gospel reading meetings." In the villages and homes Sunday rest and icon devotions were being allowed. Itinerant preachers were spreading new Christian sects, and in numerous circles the "old-guard party line" was being superseded by a new religious tolerance and a new interest in matters spiritual. The Breda-Brussels releases were soon considered as most authoritative and they did more than anything else to prove how wise was the distinction so often made by the Popes between the atheist ideology of out-moded Marxism and the living spirit of a great nation.

A similar distinction was found in most European countries between communist sectarians and the working-classes. The task of the Breda-Brussels agencies was to show how the Christian attitude, as always, was on the side of men of good will everywhere. When the Popular Front extended the hand of friendship to Catholic workers in France, Pope Pius responded through Cardinal Verdier: "If the gesture of the outstretched hand means your desire to know your Catholic brethren better so as to respect them better . . . the Church will not refuse . . . and you will find she helps mightily for the happiness of all." Cardinal Gerlier added, "We will remain, whatever may happen, fraternal toward those who extend a hand to us. There will be from our side no word or gesture that could create division."

This tolerance does not include tolerance for those who wilfully deceive the masses. Special sources of inside information enabled the Catholic press agencies to unmask many maneuvers and, in some cases, to win the battle in public opinion against partisan conspirators. One anecdote of special significance may be told here. August Deboeck, former leader of the Belgian Communist Youth Organization, announced to a collaborator of the Catholic press center of Brussels

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that he had broken with the Communist Party. He had studied at Moscow University and, leaving his Russian wife and child there, had been sent on a mission to Spain. His description of the brutal methods of the GPU, the reason for his break with communism, were released by the Catholic press agency and were widely diffused. He was warned by his former comrades in Brussels, "If you continue informing against us, your wife and child in Moscow will be shot." This was a crucial case in which the press might help in a matter of life or death. If it kept silent, he had no guarantee of the safety of his family. If the matter were given full publicity it was probable that, in this period of Popular Front propaganda, the Communists would not risk a loss in popularity and would liberate the family. The latter course was followed and "the case Deboeck" made headlines all over Europe: "Innocent Wife and Child Will Be Shot Because Husband Tells the Truth." "What Price Anti-Fascist Union If the Democratic Right to Change Party Affiliation is Threatened with Murder and Blackmail?" Since Belgium belonged to the comintern jurisdiction of Paris, together with the north of France, Paris Communist headquarters had to make a decision. In consequence, a few days later the communist organs in Belgium proved that the wife and child of Deboeck were safe in Brussels. In fact they had been flown from Moscow to make this statement possible.

This and many other incidents later brought the Communist Party in Belgium to acknowledge that it had lost half of its members due to Catholic press action. The General Secretary of the Flemish communists, Vanden Boom, even went so far as to promise, in a discourse at a Party meeting, that the first bullet of the *"grand soir"* revolution would be fired at the head of the Catholic Press Center of Brussels.

One more anecdote: a Catholic refugee in Toulouse confessed to a Leftist friend: "I have seen that the priests are the most regular visitors at Occupation Headquarters, and I fear you Leftists are correct in accusing them of being pro-fascist." The Leftist answered: "You are wrong. I happen to know that the priests make those visits not to save their own hides but to intercede for the Jews and socialists, and for any man who is unjustly oppressed."

★

It had become increasingly evident, beginning several years before the present war, that the greatest threat to religion comes from fascism and not from leftism. The Popular Front government in France, the coalition governments (with socialists in leading positions) in Belgium, Holland, Slovakia and elsewhere, did in fact avoid anti-clericalism and practiced increasing tolerance, whereas in fascist and semi-fascist countries official declarations in favor of Christianity masked systematic efforts to make of religion an instrument of the totalitarian State. A German bishop said to a collaborator of the International Catholic Press Agency: "The atheist communists have shot some thousands of Christians and found out that this shooting has awakened millions from their lethargy; the nazis are more dangerous because they are slowly poisoning the minds of Christians, and we cannot wait to resist till the moment when the death-sleep comes."

From 1937 on, the majority of German bishops were convinced that the Concordat had been treacherously used against them, and saw only one last hope: a mighty movement of public opinion in free countries to stop Hitler in his persecution of religion. Through a special network of uncensored communications the Breda-Brussels agency managed to secure a regular supply of the most authoritative reports on the religious aspects of the German situation. These items which, for reasons of prudence, were released through multiple channels as coming from outside Germany, were regularly reprinted and commented on in all free countries. The unmasking of nazi maneuvers became so efficient that Goebbels was obliged to organize a "Catholic Press Service" to counteract it. If an organized effort to liberate minds from error and deceit had been started earlier, the nazi plans might not have succeeded so well. A tragic but convincing proof of the success of Catholic networks of information against nazi propaganda is found in the fact that the Catholic press agencies received priority in hate and suppression immediately following nazi occupation.

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The Breda agency was a target for a low flying plane on the day of the invasion of Holland, the Brussels agency was immediately taken over by the "Geheime Feldpolizen" (Military Gestapo) and later partially destroyed in a search for documents. Six of the leading collaborators who were caught by Hitler have died as a result of ill-treatment.

When the CIP was founded in July, 1940, in Lisbon, to carry on in a more concentrated form the work of the Breda-Brussels network, the unmasking of the deceit practiced by the nazis after the invasion of Holland, Belgium, France, was one of its first tasks. The first copy of *Libre Belgique* was smuggled to Lisbon by a remarkable stratagem of the man who became the first staff writer of CIP in Lisbon, and since then the supply of news on nazi action and Christian counteraction has steadily increased through new channels leading to CIP correspondents in Lausanne, London and Stockholm.

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Communications

PLEA FOR LIBERTY

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: I am sorry about Jean C. de Menasce's review of Bernanos's "Plea For Liberty" (THE COMMONWEAL, June 16). In most of what he says he is, of course, right. There are many faults in Bernanos's book. There is too much black and white. There is occasional unfairness. Bernanos has written violently. And so these faults were inevitable. But they are not the important thing. The important thing is that a Christian has had the courage to cry out eloquently and passionately against the moral lethargy, "the anarchy of Christian consciences," which has been the great scandal of our time. The truth of the indictment Father de Menasce acknowledges, but it is almost as an afterthought. Yet it is this indictment which is central to the book.

Father de Menasce thinks Bernanos adolescent because he is vehement. This is a depressing criticism. When the blood of Chinese women and children was scarcely dry on the pavements of the South Station in Shanghai and while the stench of Nanking still assailed the collective nostrils of mankind many a Christian—and more than one of their pastors—were blandly insisting to me that the Japanese madness was morally justified as a crusade against communism. Were the violent, bitter, impassioned protests of my conscience the marks of adolescence? Has Christianity become as cynical as that?

I agree with Father de Menasce that Bernanos is unfair to the "Reverend Fathers." He is unfair because he reserves special shafts of satire for them. They have been no more—and no less—guilty than others. The point is we have all been guilty. Bernanos's unfairness is, therefore, not important. It is important that a Christian have the courage to cry out—however violently—the truth, and that we have the humility to acknowledge it. It is in such courage—and such humility—that the strength of Christianity lies.

REV. GEORGE H. DUNNE, S. J.

LONDON COMMENTARY

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: In your issue of June 16, 1944, in an article by J. L. Benvenisti, the following statement is made: "For the vast problem of Indian poverty is simply the problem of a huge population pressing on the means of subsistence."

Students of the population problems of Asia and other continents are not unfamiliar with this stock argument of neo-malthusian birth preventionists; but they do not expect to have to put up with it in the columns of a review directed by Catholic laymen. It is, in any case, demonstrably false.

C. E. MCGUIRE.

It is difficult to understand Dr. McGuire's interpretation of Mr. Benvenisti's statement. The sentence immediately following that quoted by Dr. McGuire reads as follows: "In the past ten years alone the population of India has increased by fifty millions, a fact which is really a tremendous tribute to the security of life under British rule." Certainly there is no hint of neo-malthusianism here. It seems to us—and we must reply on Mr. Benvenisti's behalf, since the war makes anything else impossible—that all he intended to state was a simple fact: India's vast population exceeds her present productive capacity and hence poverty is rife. Having made this statement, two conclusions are possible. Either her productive capacity should be stepped up by much-needed reforms, or her population should be decreased. Mr. Benvenisti definitely advocates the former and does not even hint at the latter. Are we, then, to suppose that merely calling attention to her present "super-abundance of mouths" is tantamount to advocating birth control? This we believe to be entirely far-fetched.—THE EDITORS.

THE CHURCHES AND THE PEACE

Woodbury, Conn.

TO the Editors: In October 1943 there was issued an important pronouncement entitled "Catholic, Jewish and Protestant Declaration on World Peace." It presented seven postulates of a just peace as embodying the principles of moral law and their prime applications to world problems of our day. The document carried the signatures of outstanding leaders of the three communions. Similar action has been taken jointly in Great Britain.

Additional pronouncements have been made, each asserting the need for world cooperation and calling for a peace based on moral ethics and Judeo-Christian principles. In the face of all of these declarations it is passing strange why no further concrete action was suggested for securing implementation of the aspirations expressed, by bringing spiritual principles directly to bear in the making of peace. So many seemed to think that once resolutions were passed and declarations made they could safely leave everything to diplomats and politicians, such as wrote the last peace terms: in other words that, by some shadowy kind of remote control, the seven postulates of the Catholic, Jewish and Protestant Declaration will, somehow, affect the thinking and decisions of the peace delegates. Can the world afford to take such a chance with its future at stake?

Over a year ago, the very rational proposal was advanced that our government establish a special religious advisory council, composed of outstanding clerical and lay leaders of the recognized churches of America, to function continuously and act solely in a consultative capacity to the peace delegates when the peace commission is organized. Our peace delegation will have expert consultants on every conceivable subject at its command: why not expert consultants on religion? Surely the surest forces for peace lie in the spiritual life of man: who can better understand and interpret the deep-seated aspirations, relationships and needs of man than their religious advisors?

It is not enough that Catholic Christianity speak with one voice, Protestantism with another and Judaism with a third. The peace conference will deal with all men:

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it would be interested only in religion as a whole. In this connection, every Catholic should read "Intercredal Cooperation in the Papal Documents" by Father Wilfrid Parsons, S.J., in the June, 1943, issue of *Theological Studies* (the America Press).

The religious world has a definite stake in such peace conference considerations as religious activities, social questions, child welfare, child labor, education and many others—in fact with all proposals affecting the general social welfare of the people of the world. There are, naturally, many questions that would have no place before the religious advisory council. But the council would be there, continuously functioning to weigh all proposals of the peace commission and express its recommendations, and seeking to influence decisions purely through education and moral suasion.

Very many resolutions of organizations and many hundreds of personal letters endorsing this religious advisory council plan have been sent to the President and the Secretary of State and many of the senators. A large and constantly growing informal group of men and women of all faiths stand behind the plan. It is also supported by many who have no formal church affiliation. Will those readers who feel the same way write at once to the President stating their desire that religious advice, Catholic, Jewish and Protestant, be made continuously available to those charged with preparing and executing the peace, through some such plan as that outlined herein?

WILLIAM MONTGOMERY BENNETT.

There has been considerable advocacy in certain circles for the proposal advanced in his letter by Mr. Bennett. It is certainly a proposal which at first glance seems attractive. In his preface to "Principles for Peace," a volume of selections from Papal documents, Father H. C. Koenig writes: "To anyone sincerely concerned with the establishment of a just and lasting peace, it is inconceivable that the peacemakers will spurn the invaluable contribution which the Pope can make toward the settlement of the deep problems that lie at the roots of modern political and social disorder." This statement could easily be interpreted as agreeing with Mr. Bennett's proposal.

Yet we are convinced that any scheme for an advisory religious council to be associated with the peace conference is full of practical dangers and might readily prove a tragic mistake. In his preface Father Koenig likewise quotes Pius XI's definition of the stand which the Papacy would take toward such participation. "The Holy See declares that it wishes to remain and will remain extraneous to all temporal disputes between nations, and to national congresses convoked for the settlement of such disputes, unless the contending parties make a joint appeal to its mission of peace; *nevertheless, it reserves the right in every case to exercise its moral and spiritual power." It seems to us that this is an admirably wise attitude to take, and that its wisdom applies not only to the Papacy but to any persons claiming a right to moral authority.*

The exercise of one's imagination on Mr. Bennett's proposal suggests three major dangers inherent in it. Doubtless there are many others. These major dangers can best be stated in the form of questions. Assuming that the advisory council Mr. Bennett suggests is selected by the Government of the United States, or by any other of the victorious governments, *what guarantee have we that it will not turn into a machinery for justifying on moral grounds acts which are in fact unjust, if only because its members will naturally function fully as much as Americans as they will as moral leaders? (In other words, such religious guidance is possible only if it emanates from a* neutral *source, at the* joint *request of victors and vanquished.) What guarantee does practical experience afford us that such a religious advisory council would not become a tool in the hands of unscrupulous pressure groups, which would not hesitate to make use of every Machiavellian means in order to secure the great moral advantage of approval for their claims from this advisory council? Supposing that such a council were set up, and that some attention were given to its recommendations, would not any subsequent failure of the peace be squarely blamed on this council, even though it might have had no part in the weaker aspects of the settlement?*

We believe that with the world as it now is, a world by no means religious, however much the leaven of religion may be working within it, the proper function of religious leadership is to reserve "the right in every case to exercise its moral and spiritual power" by means of strong protest, exhortation and specific guidance based on the general principles already stated. We believe that to go further is to invite catastrophe.—THE EDITORS.

INNER FORUM

Chicago, Ills.

TO the Editors: While we were very pleased to see in the July 21 issue of THE COMMONWEAL mention of the article by Bishop Yu-pin on "Chinese Catholic Culture Movement" which was reprinted in our *Fu Jen,* we must inform you that it first appeared in the *American Ecclesiastical Review* and through a regrettable oversight the credit line was left out.

In justice to this review we request that you make this fact known to your readers.

REV. FATHER RALPH, S.V.D.,
National Director,
Catholic University of Peking.

THE FUGITIVES

Scott Field, Ills.

TO the Editors: I confess myself somewhat shocked at the violent response which my recent article on the Nashville Fugitives elicited from Professor Beatty, of Vanderbilt University, whose letter was published in THE COMMONWEAL for July 12. Disagreement I should have expected from Professor Beatty, who has long been a hanger-on of the group, but I was scarcely prepared for such a battery of abuse. I am the more surprised since he seems to have taken many of my statements in a personal sense; the truth is that I never even mentioned him in my article (could it be that he felt himself slighted?), for I always regarded his association with the Fugitives as rather one-sided and tenuous at best. It was quite unnecessary for him to deny, that he was a Fugitive (no

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one, so far as I know, ever regarded him as one), though I suspect he was not altogether sincere in doing so.

The charge that I am "sailing under false colors" when I announce myself a former member of the Vanderbilt English Department, however, I must repudiate. The fact is that, while working for the Ph.D. at Vanderbilt, I taught English to University students and received a salary from the English Department therefor. I had (and still have) the impression that I was a member of the department teaching staff, and Professor Beatty's attempt to establish the contrary I regard as mere personal pique, the possible source of which I have already hinted. His statement, "Since he came to us highly recommended, he was awarded a teaching fellowship in English" is a plain misstatement; it had been arranged some three or four months before I ever went to Vanderbilt that I was to teach there: that, indeed, was the sole condition under which I should ever have considered going.

Since Professor Beatty has made the irrelevant accusation that I "rather ostentatiously neglected" some of my graduate studies there, and has even gone to the trouble of looking up my records in the Registrar's Office, I must confess that, of the four courses in which I was enrolled, I found one to have been conducted by a well-meaning but hopelessly limited pedant, and another by Mr. Donald Davidson of Fugitive fame, who as a professor is even poorer than as a poet. It will never be forgiven me by those men that I declined to worship at the Fugitive shrine; my reluctance to do so made me, in their eyes, "lazy and egotistical." The truth is that I was sadly disappointed in Vanderbilt's English Department, though the place interested me for other reasons.

So much for personalia. Now for a few of Mr. Beatty's objections. When I used the term "father" to apply to Mr. Ransom, I meant that he was at once the most active, coherent, and intellectually mature—as well as the most successful artistically—member of the original group, a fact which I do not think even Mr. Beatty would care to dispute. That seems to me a justifiable use of the term; there were, of course, no by-laws nor even any specific credo, as I showed in my article; had there been, however, Ransom would certainly have been the logical man to formulate them.

Mr. Beatty states that I am in error when I say that the Fugitives received "generous backing from various wealthy Nashville families." Yet he himself admits donations of at least "a hundred dollars or so" from the late Joel Cheek, and the Fugitives' own anthology ("Fugitives," Harcourt, 1928) explicitly states that the magazine, owing to such donations, never experienced any financial difficulties.

Again objecting to my phrase, "the paradox of a scholar-sophisticate such as Ransom, fresh from the halls of Christ Church, Oxford, clamoring for a plough and team of mules," Mr. Beatty points out that sixteen years elapsed between Ransom's leaving Oxford and the publication of "I'll Take My Stand," the agrarian symposium. That is correct. But long, long before the publication of that book, the agrarian philosophy had been developed in the hothouse atmosphere of certain Southern parlors, and Ransom was the leading exponent of that philosophy.

In attempting to explode my "most splendid fiction" (i.e., that the Fugitives subscribed in practice to an ivory tower idea) Mr. Beatty has become involved in an interesting contradiction. He says: "No other group has striven more vehemently . . . to persuade education, economics, politics and religion to descend from their ivory towers to the common earth. No other group has engaged more frequently in the rough-and-tumble of public discussion or devoted energy to a wider variety of interests—literary or non-literary." Yet, when I mention the sociological connections of the group, he again objects: "By the elementary process of counting names, Mr. Evans could have discovered that only four of the sixteen Fugitives took part in the agrarian program." It would appear that Mr. Beatty is merely out to object, and not to clarify. And even assuming that the Fugitives did "strive vehemently to get poetry out of the ivory tower," it does not require a very close reading of them to realize how dismally short they fell of that aim. Of course that never *was* their aim.

I shall not trouble to quarrel with Professor Beatty on specific matters of critical opinion; I think I am already acquainted with his views on the poets under discussion.

I have far more respect for Mr. Beatty's industry as a scholar than for his acumen as a critic of poetry. Nor does it seem to me necessary to answer the unsupported charge that I am unacquainted with the real work of the Fugitives: I shall merely suggest that my interpretation of their work is entirely different from his. Phrases such as "like any lazy and egotistical sophomore," "adolescent and meaningless misstatement," I naturally resent, but I feel that they rather give themselves away.

PRIVATE OLIVER W. EVANS.

BOMBING

Montreal, Que.

TO the Editors: One of your comparatively recent editorials, in which you referred to indiscriminate bombing as "murder," inspires me to make some comments on some subsequent developments. I have a theory that the one person responsible is in reality "irresponsible" in a different sense, and we are witnessing a repetition of a pattern previously exhibited, i.e., in the crazy expeditions to stamp out Bolshevism, and the Dardanelles expedition, both of which fiascos had the same author.

I am actually prompted by the Pope's message to Poland of yesterday in which he expressed sentiments which we all know to be true, and which only George Bernard Shaw has had courage to express; but for every paragraph given to these teachings of decency we get pages of Vansittartism. It seems that journalism has reached its lowest ethical level. Journalists such as Walter Lippmann advising people not to support Wallace as he was too idealistic.

Another precipitating cause of this letter was the bombing of Ghent the other day; the excuse being that important assembly plants were there. I sent a cultural map of Ghent to the Commission of Learned Societies for the preservation of Historic Monuments at their request, and aside from some textile works it is primarily a great monument of culture. A single bomb dropped in the

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Square St. Bavon would destroy half-a-dozen Five-Star historic monuments. The 90 percent destruction of Caen by our troops is no source of pride either although less reprehensible than the case of Ghent or Bruges. The latter was bombed twice, although not possessing a single factory, or ever being touched by the Germans.

This same irresponsible with whom delegation after delegation in London pleaded to stop the mutual bombing of civilians, which the Germans were prepared to agree to, refused, and advised the Germans to go to the outskirts and "watch the home fires burning." Now that the pendulum is swinging the other way and that the shoe is on the other foot with robot bombs, we hear nauseating lies, not only from British but from American reporters as well, on the horrors of killing civilians. It was of course positively angelic to bomb civilian areas with incendiaries and to gloat over children in flames jumping into the canals where their charred bodies were later recovered, the size of dolls.

No wonder that a group of clergymen, American and Canadian, protested and said that in the last war "Some shreds of decency had been observed."

The situation now is so morally rotten that if a person were to urge that the Geneva rules of civilized warfare be carried out, barring killing of civilians, he would be suspect.

The gradual destruction of European cities' art as well as of their children and mothers by starvation is progressing at a great rate. Is it not nearly if not quite time that some united request be made by us that the person responsible step down and out once and for all, before he destroys all Europe? If our North American leaders have not sufficient moral gumption to refuse to trail along behind in this procession of dishonor they should be replaced.

JOHN RALSTON.

The Stage & Screen

Life with Father

IN THESE DAYS of the dog, I was truly grateful to the Serlin management for its invitation to drop into the Empire to investigate the latest "Father" and "Vinnie Day": Arthur Margetson and Nydia Westman. If the prospect of an evening spent in the most romantic theater in town, in the midst of a full, pleased, various, *cooled* house, and confronted by the most stimulating set still to be viewed on the street—if this prospect would seem to offer you sundry delights, then I can only urge that you go again this week, next week, sometime, ever. I think it's worth it.

There is, I safely hazard, little point in attaching a synopsis of the play to this appreciation. Now on the last lap of its fifth year, this script must be nationally—even internationally—by heart. I do, of course, regret the chance of tapping that large fount of idle adjectives—words like *irascible, crotchety, testy, tart*—which

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are a seldom fit to members of my generation whose economic commitments do not, let us say, generally allow for such personal scope; but which, when applied to "Father," seem happily to signify qualities of character as well as independence. Somewhere in here there should be a continuance of that discussion (Unamuno augmented by Padraic Colum) of personality versus individuality—but I am afraid it is simply too hot. Surely it will suffice to say that if to all of us—if even to his author—"Father" is (was) mainly a memory, at least he is the memory of a *man,* more luckily alive than a good many of us. Or is this cynicism this weather?

Somewhat more graceful, although otherwise step-for-step with Lindsay, Mr. Margetson is, I think, superb in one of the most rewarding parts ever designed for the man in the makeup. He plays to the hilt and I do like to watch his hands. And Miss Westman is interesting. Leaning rather more on the comedy than I remember Miss Stickney to have done, I felt she came across as, perhaps, a little too young and a little too much. I missed the feeling of profound quiet confidence stimulated by the original reading. The present bevy of maids appeared highly satisfactory, and the present children—Ben Cooper and Jack Dimond—the most charming and articulate I have seen. It is only the adolescents of the piece—Peter Youmans's Clarence, William Daniels's John, and Pamela Gillespie's Mary—who seem to have stumbled badly into parody—the great danger of the business. One and all, these youngsters are incapable of filling Bretaigne Windust's very detailed direction with any sort of life, so that what emerges is something badly and severally distorted. Mr. Daniels's peculiar air and carriage are disturbingly mysterious; Mr. Youmans's diction is niminy (he pronounces "suit" as though it were "suet," for instance) and he announces all his lines; and Miss Gillespie resembles nothing so much as a gentle, very pretty (I'm sorry) octopus. These are all excellent, challenging parts, and as the play has successively, year by year, reared itself into an honorable institution, one likes to think of young actors of the most talent being graduated from it to the remoter and more dangerous purlieus of Broadway. I wish the original triumvirate, Lindsay-Stickney-Windust, could descend one of these evenings and pull these particular scenes out of the sort of false period frame they have slipped into at the moment, and back on the stage, into life.

Finally, for the producer, a question. Certainly the history of this piece is both too long and too glorious simply to rest on, don't you think, Mr. Serlin? What gives? and when and where? (*At the Empire.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Heavy Dragon; Flippant Ghost

THE WAR appears in two new pictures this week. In one it is rightfully portrayed in its most serious and horrific aspects; in the other it is used only as background—almost as an excuse for bringing a charming tale up to date by inserting a group of jocular soldiers into its plot.

"Dragon Seed" is the kind of a film I admire more for its intention than its execution. Based on Pearl S. Buck's vivid novel, it tells the story of a small community in China in 1937 and particularly of the family of Ling Tan. After a slow but colorful beginning that establishes the relationships of the father, mother, three sons, daughter, sons' wives, daughter's husband and various cousins, and that well portrays the unmodern conditions in the valley of Ling, the film goes into most violent action with the arrival of the Japanese and war. Ling's daughter-in-law, Jade, representing the new Chinese woman who can read, tries to warn Ling and the family; but it is not until the Japanese bring death and destruction, pillage and rape to Ling's valley that its people believe in the actuality of the war. Jade, the fighting sons and the vicious enemy themselves persuade Ling and the other respected elders that they must resist the enemy, they must kill or be killed. "Dragon Seed" is a stirring tribute to the Chinese, to the valiant fight they have been waging against odds and to their great courage in meeting the exigencies of modern war. The scenes in which Ling, his family and neighbors burn their farms to scorch the earth before the advancing enemy are exceedingly moving and are bound to win admiration for our allies who have been in combat with our common foe since 1937. It is to the credit of Scriptwriters Marguerite Roberts and Jane Murfin that they have written such a good screenplay and one that is so faithful to the spirit of Mrs. Buck's novel which portrays its characters from the Chinese and not the American point of view. Directors Jack Conway and Harold S. Bucquet have done their difficult job well, particularly in the exciting episode in which Jade poisons the Japanese officers and the later scenes showing the Chinese burning their farms. My greatest quarrel with "Dragon Seed" is in Producer Pandro Berman's cast. It is difficult to overlook the variety of accents that speak the script's lines. While the acting itself is good, particularly in the case of Walter Huston, Aline MacMahon and Turhan Bey, the voices of Katharine Hepburn (still sounding like a Philip Barry heroine) and Akim Tamiroff (sounding like a ghetto merchant) are utterly incongruous in this picture. It is only the force of the story, the sincerity of its theme and the good production that succeed in making one forget that these are not actors in a pageant. But in spite of its manner of expression, its conglomeration of accents, "Dragon Seed" deserves serious consideration for its nobility of purpose.

So far have the makers of *"The Canterville Ghost"* departed from Oscar Wilde's story that I wonder that they didn't start entirely afresh and even give their movie a new name. With delightful humor, the original told the tale of an American family who lived in a haunted English castle. This story was not only full of hilarious ribbing of the whole idea of ghost stories but also had a lot of clever satire on English and Americans. The movie version isn't quite sure of its treatment. Its kidding of the ghostly stuff is too self-conscious; and its Anglo-American satire depends often on slapstick. Scriptwriter Edwin Harvey has made the American visitors a platoon of soldiers—Rangers (whose personnel includes such comedians as Rags Ragland and William Gargan) who are being trained for Commando raids. At first these

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"boys" are duly scared when Ghost Charles Laughton stalks abroad clanking his chains, carrying his head or performing various supernatural tricks with a flair for the theatrical. But the GI Joes soon get his number and scare the sheets right off him. Laughed at or not, this Canterville Ghost has to continue his stalking until a descendant commits a brave deed while wearing his ring. It turns out that one of these Americans (Robert Young) is a descendant; and, inspired by the present Lady Canterville, a wise little miss of six years (Margaret O'Brien), he finally shows his bravery. This scene, at the film's climax, is unfortunately carried to absurd heights; but at least it does have some action and most of the film up to this point, except for the very funny sequence in which the soldiers initiate the English into boogie-woogie, is static and talky. At times Director Jules Dassin forgets that he's making a moving picture. The whole situation, discussed too often instead of acted, is embellished with conversation about *noblesse oblige,* democracy and Anglo-American good will. One idea (which also appears in the Wilde original) concerning the fact that nowadays the English and Americans have everything in common except their language, is illustrated to the point of tedium. Although "The Canterville Ghost" doesn't come up to its movie possibilities and its acting is uninspired (Mr. Laughton is even badly cast as the cowardly ghost; why wasn't Roland Young or Edmund Gwenn used?), the film has its amusing moments and provides enough fun to keep you from being bored. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

An Enigma Explained

BARRY BYRNE

IT IS NOW five years since "Finnegans Wake" appeared, and the interest in James Joyce and in this, his last epic book, has shown no sign of diminishing. While far from being a popular interest, the literary standing of the writers who have issued critical and appreciative estimates of Joyce's work, may be taken to indicate its importance. Not that this is an argument for its profundity or truth, but it is indicative of its place in literature when writers such as Edmund Wilson, Thornton Wilder and others give it such detailed attention. The "Wake" is a disturbingly prophetic book in its allegory, and it fits uncomfortably close to the apprehensively viewed outcome of the European cataclysm. This, no doubt, increases its interest to the more thoughtful and spiritually disturbed writers.

When I wrote in THE COMMONWEAL shortly after Joyce's death that "Finnegans Wake" was the major literary enigma in a time when enigmatic art had become the rule, rather than the exception, I also hazarded the guess that its full interpretation would lay bare a definite and important literary content and I even rashly surmised that this interpretation might appear as a posthumous work of James Joyce himself. That has not happened, but its place has been taken, in very adequate fashion, by "A Skeleton Key To Finnegans Wake," by Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson. The painstaking and exhaustive study that must have gone into its preparation by no means hampers the evocative literary style of the book. It opens with a short résumé* entitled "Introduction to a Strange Subject" that, for me, had one disconcerting aspect. It was so well done that it tended to discourage me from writing on the same theme.

The mere fact that Joyce spent eighteen years in the composition of the "Wake" is enough evidence that his book has little connection with the typical, spontaneous, vaporing of surrealist writers, nor with the species of automatic writing that popularized the name of Gertrude Stein. The kaleidoscopic merging of characters in the "Wake," however, give it a quality very much like that of a dream. A critic would be very careless of his reputation who, because of this, too closely identified it with the usual surrealist effort, or failed to note its vital difference. That difference lies in the definite intellectual content of the allegory, and Joyce may be described as an artist whose thinking logic is based on his Catholic background and whose literary manner, or treatment of his material, simulated a dream atmosphere. And for the purposes of an allegory this simulation has many advantages, particularly when the allegory attempts a universal, timeless scope. The result, in the "Wake," is an effect of dim figures passing in a perpetual twilight, and of persons discernible for short periods and then lost again in the murky totality of human types.

For "Finnegans Wake," as Messrs. Campbell and Robinson demonstrate, is an allegory developed around a timeless and universal theme, that of death and resurrection. While the authors only speak of its "Rabelaisian humor," the parallelism of Joyce and the priest of Meudon must appear as more innate and profound than this one of mutual laughter at the infantile capering of humanity in the face of God and eternity. What they had in common was a religious and spiritual heritage which revealed life as a transitory, shifting thing, in relationship to the immovable grandeur of eternity. Mankind's serious concern with the things of the world then became a tragi-comedy of grandiose dimensions, and they so delineated it. And this humor is innate in the situation for it comes of a realization that the huge follies of humanity require something akin to the large laughter of the gods.

Joyce's comedy, therefore, deals with the endless fall and rise of man, and of the institutions and cultures he creates. It may be regarded as significant that the book starts with a *fall,* that of Finnegan from his ballad-celebrated ladder. As the authors of this analysis of the

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"Wake" state it, "Finnegan's fall from the ladder is hugely symbolic; it is Lucifer's fall, Adam's fall, the setting sun that will rise again, the fall of Rome (or of civilization), a Wall Street crash. And it is every man's daily, recurring fall from grace." It, therefore, presupposes an original, higher estate for mankind. This basic idea, as well as variations on the idea of original sin, which are involved with the reiteration of the *fall* theme, indicates its spiritual and doctrinal source.

The authors further state that "These various fallings (implying as they do corresponding resurrections) cause a liberation of energy that keeps the universe turning like a waterwheel, and provide the dynamic which sets in motion the four-part cycle of universal history." This four-part cycle, as they explain, is based on the theories of Giambattista Vico, an eighteenth century Neapolitan philosopher. In essence this consisted of a view that history passes through four phases: theocratic, aristocratic, democratic and chaotic. And that the last phase is marked by individualism and sterility. The parallel between the chaotic period and our own time is indicated, and that "it represents the nadir of man's fall. It is terminated by a thunderclap, which terrifies and re-awakens mankind to the claims of the supernatural, and thus starts the cycle turning again with a return to primeval theocracy." The authors indicate the relationship of this theory to that of Spengler in his "Decline of the West." It is of some interest, and possibly illuminating, to note that these theories of social decay were produced, respectively, by an Italian and German, and that both of their native countries have seen recent attempts to establish something resembling a pseudo-scientific theocracy, predicated on a belief in the decay of modern society and of democratic institutions. This idea of general decay is based on a fundamentally erroneous conception that is very usual among Europeans. There is an almost unspoken assumption that Europe *is* the Western world and that its decay, and the collapse of its institutions, means the collapse of Western civilization. We in the Americas have every reason to question that.

I am quoting at some length from the "Skeleton Key" because I find so much that admirably summarises and delineates the anatomical framework of the "Wake." Beyond the interest of this framework, however, the Joyce book is rich in imagery and Celtic expressiveness. While the theme of the *fall and resurrection* is repeated throughout, there are accompanying themes related to matter that makes for social ferment in the world and, according to Joyce's rendering of the Viconian theory, activates its momentum. Sexual polarity, as an instance, which is exemplified in the typical male and female characteristics of Finnegan's successor, after his fall, and this man's wife. The successor is named Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, also referred to as H.C.E., and, significantly, as Here Comes Everybody and Have Childers Everywhere. His wife, who is also variable as to name, is Anna Livia Plurabelle. The husband is described in the analysis as the container of "fixed energy" which in the wife's younger days it is her function to "shatter," just as it becomes, in her older days, her purpose "to gather up the remains of her broken lord, and consign them again to a fresh start." She "converts the past into the future and displays the female's typical concern with the future of her race." These, with their children, the old housekeeper, as well as the patrons of the pub presided over by H.C.E., appear and re-appear in various guises throughout the "Wake," their comment varying between the awesomely sibylline in quality to that which has the full gusto of ordinary, low class, Irish comment.

If the plot of Joyce's book revolves around man's fall and resurrection (not redemption, we note) the subplots and interplay of embroidered elucidation revolves around "mutually supplementary antagonisms: male-and-female, age-and-youth, life-and-death, love-and-hate; these by their attraction, conflicts and repulsions, supply polar energies that spin the universe." What Joyce presents, therefore, "is nothing more or less than the eternal dynamic implicit in birth, conflict, death and resurrection."

It is my own view, moreover, that "Finnegans Wake" is a book that issues from the old age of Europe, and I mean that in a spiritual rather than a physical sense. While true to universal facts, in their broader implication, it carries a conception of the universe that suggests an automatic mechanism with mystical connotations and an inevitability that minimizes the effect of man's spritual nature, and of the persistence, under God, of the forceful, determining aspiration this releases. It is true, however, that a spiritually motivated impulse may be considered as implicit in the idea of resurrection. The "Wake" is a book possessing something of magnificence, as well as a disillusioned detachment from man as a separate individual. I have a feeling that this detachment may extend to the Fatherhood of God and that in the development of the "Wake," Eastern Occultism merged with Irish Catholicism. And that, in the case of James Joyce, as in that of the very different Santayana, the habit of Catholic tradition persisted rather than the reality of it.

More Books of the Week

Primer of the Coming World. Leopold Schwarzschild. Knopf. $2.50.

EVER SINCE Wilson's ship set sail to bring him back home and to the great disappointment of his life, there has been a growing conviction in Europe that the greatest mistakes of the peace he left behind came out of good intentions based on dreams, on generalizations, equivocations and simplifications. Leopold Schwarzschild's book in this sense is very European and very realistic. Many will find it pessimistic and discouraging, but it is not meant to be so. On the contrary, Schwarzschild describes as defeatists those "who are clamoring for just the things nobody can honestly promise, and who fall into whining desperation when in answer to their constant question about the 'meaning of the war' they are shown not Heaven but only the earth." The refusal even to consider the "next best solutions" seems to him one of the reasons for so many of the "worst resolutions" we have seen. No future settlement should be based on anticipated changes, but rather on trying to bring about changes through realistic and workable solutions, the "raw

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material of the new world being not a new Adam but the old Adam." For example, consider the world authority. Schwarzschild is absolutely for it, but he refuses to consider it as a *conditio sine qua non*. If it can be realized, so much the better, but no urgent problem of peace can wait until it is realized or can be left unsettled in case of failure. In the same way he attacks a lot of idealistic misconceptions: "the legend that, by virtue of some mysterious inspiration those who are governed are wiser than those who govern them"; that therefore a golden "century of the common man" can be created because the "common men" of different nations get along together better than their leaders; or that wars are solely caused by economic forces, such as capitalism, and that therefore peace can be secured through economic change.

This book is not pleasant reading for those who believe that this war in reality is a revolution. Neither the principle of the national state nor the right of self-determination, not even democracy, are considered as absolute guarantees for peace and cure-alls. As a matter of fact, the very conviction is challenged that there is any such thing as a "universal recipe for peace." Destroying illusions is no negative thing. Every cure, however, consists of diagnosis and therapy, and in the case of this book the diagnosis is definitely more convincing than the suggested therapy. Schwarzschild finds the excellent formula, "freedom from fear of Germany," as a main peace aim. For him "this is a German war" and not a war against fascism or between democracies and dictatorships. Dictatorships are fighting on both sides. By labeling Russia democratic, the Russian régime is not changed, but the term democracy is made to deteriorate. Japan and Italy offer but "minor problems." The fact that Italy really never belonged to the "other side" might have been even more stressed. There remains the "principal chapter of the settlement"—Germany.

None of the dangerous illusions other political exiles from Germany indulge in are to be found in this book. Schwarzschild knows that a German revolution offers no solution, because the German problem is not a social problem and aggressiveness was never limited to any particular class, and neither was nazism. The sweet suggestion of solving the problem by the liquidation of entire classes gets what it deserves. But somehow his own solution does not sound very convincing either: long continued occupation with the exclusive aim of guaranteeing complete demobilization. Schwarzschild does not believe in "reeducation" because the educational aims of the three victors are so different, and he does not believe in "deindustrialization" either, because of their divergent economic views. How can he believe in any joint occupation lasting for generations? And why should any occupation be limited to the big three, if it is admitted that Germany's neighbors have a primary right to security and could not depend on the great powers last time to guarantee it?

In his somewhat surprising defense of Prussia he finds that the German problem really consists of two elements: Prussian militarism and Pan-German ecstasy. For his cure, however, he seems to consider the latter the prime element. Is not his earnest belief that around the year 2,000, together with "the last Germans who ever led a trained troop or handled or manufactured weapons," the German problem will have died, flesh and bone, one of the simplifications torn to pieces in the first part of this book?

Unfortunately Schwarzschild on one point shares the blindness of many politicial exiles from Germany against

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which he offers such a good antidote: in his unwillingness to consider the centrifugal tendencies inside Germany. Dismemberment enforced from outside may be "either inadequate or superfluous." But does the same apply to what Walter Lippmann calls "the promotion of the decentralization of the German Reich into its larger historic components?" The objection that Germany has become a more "homogeneous entity" in the last ten years seems not very convincing, for the end of this period will be defeat. Hope of victory unites; defeat never does. When the Germans become inclined to overthrow everything which led to catastrophe, why should they stop at national unity? Won't they become pessimistic about that, too? Not *although,* but *because* the "amalgamation of German tribes and states has advanced farther under Hitler than ever before?" And is such a development entirely to be ignored in any future settlement?

Just to be complete, the question should be added whether Schwarzschild does not largely underestimate France as a factor in the settlement. He never speaks of France on another level than that of any other occupied country. Being disappointed in France is understandable with someone who watched her collapse so closely. But should not everybody who knows the French admit that they are the most unpredictable nation, apt most to surprise by a speedy recovery those whom they most disappointed by their inglorious collapse? Probably China is given an inadequate place, too. There remains Russia. Of course Schwarzschild sees no danger of anybody double-crossing her or wishing her any harm. As to her own aggressive aspirations, he considers them a possibility, by no means a certainty. It largely depends on Washington and London fixing "the ultimate limit of their willingness to make concessions." But I feel that what proved wrong in the case of Hitler won't prove to be clever in the case of Stalin. Following the realistic line he idealistically and passionately defends, he comes to the conclusion "that against wars among the big three no preventive means exist but their own will and self-restraint."

KLAUS DOHRN.

John Merle Coulter. Missionary in Science. Andrew Denny Rodgers III. Princeton. $3.75.

THIS IS the latest of a series of biographies, which began with the life of Wm. S. Sullivant and has covered Torrey, Gray and other less prominent figures. The general objective is to record a history of American botany and its makers rather than to build monuments to individual workers. Naturally, then, there is much in each volume about other botanists besides the one whose life is made a guide for that period of botanical development.

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Rodgers's biographies fill a gap that has long been ignored. No botanist can excuse himself in the future for not including botanical America in his perspective. The material is to be had in Rodgers's books.

J. MC A. KATER.

The War. Edgar McInnis. Oxford. $2.50.

THIS IS the fourth volume of an excellent month-to-month record of events in the present conflict, covering the calendar year 1944.

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The Inner Forum

A Suburban Church

THE PEOPLE of the parish are Italians, the pastor is Italian, and when you get in front of the church there are white stone angels and saints in the sunlight on the roof of the church; they stand along the edge of the roof, white and new; they look as if they might step off into space and walk in the air; they are like the saints on the roof of Saint John Lateran in Rome, or the saints on the pinnacles of Milan cathedral; they are heavy stones on top of a roof, but they are very much more related to the air, the winds, the white clouds.

Inside the church the Italian pastor preaches in English to his Italian parishioners because most of them come from the South of Italy and he is from Florence and if he preached to them in Italian it would sound very formal. If you are an Italian priest it is troublesome to have been born in the district of Italy which furnished Italy with its formal literary language. The pastor stands at the altar, he reads the gospel, then he turns to the altar and takes up another book. He has brought an English translation of a Latin hymn which comments on the gospel of the day. He reads the English verses to the Italians who live in this American suburban community, and the Sicilians and the Calabrians and the Florentine priest understand each other in the new language which has become the language of their daily life. The priest has had to learn it, the parishioners have had to learn it; they make the same mistakes.

In the suburbs churches have no graveyards, but whenever you see the name of anyone in print it is a name which one day will be on a tombstone and some of the names on the Honor Roll outside the church may already be on a wooden cross somewhere, or in the files, somewhere, of the missing. The list of names is placed against a wall; on top of the wall is a crucifix and of course when the mason set the crucifix on top of the wall he set it straight; the cross looked straight out from the church at the people who came walking toward the church. Then, one day, all by itself, the crucifix turned slightly toward the right, so that the head of the figure on the cross looked to the right and, since the head, exhausted, is bent forward, the head looked straight down, pitying, at the Honor Roll. When the parishioners saw what had taken place there was, of course, some talk of a miracle and photographers from the newspapers came and took photographs of the crucifix looking down at the Roll of Honor. But the pastor said that the miracle had been that some accident of stress, or in the cement which held the crucifix in place, had made the composition of the crucifix and the Honor Roll exactly as it should have been planned.

CONTRIBUTORS

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